

1. A punctum plug which is more easily visualized when positioned within a
2 punctual canal, the plug comprising:
a body having an outwardly exposed surface when so positioned; and
4 a substance causing at least the outwardly exposed surface to contrast with
surrounding tissue, such that the use of the substance causes the plug to be more easily
6 visualized than if the substance were not present.

2. The punctum plug of claim 1, wherein the substance is disposed on the
2 outwardly exposed surface.

3. The punctum plug of claim 1, wherein the substance is disposed within the
2 plug body.

4. The punctum plug of claim 1, wherein the substance includes an organic
2 or inorganic phosphor, a fluorescent material, reflective beads, quantum dots, a dye or
pigment that contrasts with surrounding tissue.

5. The punctum plug of claim 1, wherein the plug is illuminated with light at
2 an illumination wavelength, and wherein the substance generates radiated light at a
wavelength other than the illumination wavelength.

6. The punctum plug of claim 5, wherein the illumination wavelength is in

2 the violet or ultraviolet portion of the spectrum.

7. The punctum plug of claim 5, wherein the radiated light is in the visible
2 spectrum.

8. The punctum plug of claim 5, wherein the radiated light is outside the
2 visible spectrum, the invention further including a detector for detecting the radiated
light.

9. A system for determining whether or not a punctum plug is positioned
2 within the punctal canal of a person's eye, the system comprising:

the punctum plug of claim 1; and
4 at least one optical element permitting the eye to view itself, to be viewed by the
other eye, or by a second person.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein the optical element includes a source of
2 light at one or more illumination wavelengths causing the plug to reflect or re-radiate
light.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein the light which is reflected or re-radiated
2 by the plug occurs at one or more wavelengths which are different from the illumination
wavelength or wavelengths.

12. The system of claim 11, further including a filter to block or separate the
2 reflected or re-radiated wavelength(s) from the illumination wavelength(s).

13. The system of claim 11, further including a detector to detect the reflected
2 or re-radiated wavelength(s).

14. The system of claim 9, wherein the optical element includes a magnifier.

15. The system of claim 9, wherein the optical element includes a beam
2 splitter or mirror permitting the eye to view itself or to be viewed by the other eye, or by
a second person.

16. Apparatus for viewing a punctum plug illuminated by a source of light in a
2 person's eye, comprising:

a lens for magnifying the image of the punctum plug;

4 at least one light redirecting element for presenting the magnified image of the
plug to an eye of an observer; and

6 one or more optical element for blocking the light from the source of light from
reaching the observer's eye.

17. The apparatus of claim 16, including a plurality of light redirecting

- 2 elements enabling the person to view the eye containing the plug by the person's other
eye.

18. The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the light redirecting element enables a
2 person other than the person wearing the plug to view the plug.

19. The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the light redirecting element enables
2 the person wearing the plug to view the plug with the person's other eye.

20. The apparatus of claim 16, wherein:
2 the light redirecting element is switchable between a first position, such that a
person other than the person wearing the plug is able to view the plug; and
4 a first position, such that the person wearing the plug is able to view the plug with
the person's other eye.

21. The apparatus of claim 16, wherein:
2 the plug radiates light at a wavelength other than the one used for illumination;
and
4 the optical element for blocking the light from the source includes a wavelength-
selective filter.